



THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

Cathedral Station • P.O. Box 1316 • New York, N.Y. 10025 • (212) 539-7602

Website: ThreeParksDems.org • Email: ThreeParksDems@aol.com

President

Merle McEldowney

Editors

Lorraine Zamora
lzamora245@gmail.com
Jock Davenport
Richard E. Luna

District Leaders

Bob Botfeld
Cynthia Doty

State Committee

Lynn Thomas
Daniel Marks Cohen

Club Meeting, November 8, 2017

- Speakers:** Daniel J. O'Donnell, NYS Assemblyman, District 69, "What's Happening in Albany?"
Robert Jackson, former New York City Councilman, "No IDC"
- Date:** Wednesday, November 8, 2017
- Time:** 8:00 pm
- Place:** The Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103 Street
- Room:** Ballroom

AGENDA

- 7:45 pm Sign-in
8:00 pm Call to Order
District Leader Report
Speakers: Daniel J. O'Donnell, Robert Jackson
Questions & Answers
Adjourn

**Remember to Vote
on Election Day
November 7**

CALENDAR

- VOTE ON ELECTION DAY, Tuesday, Nov. 7**
- Wednesday, November 15, 8:00 pm**
Three Parks Board Meeting
- Sunday, December 3, 5:00-8:00 pm**
Three Parks Annual Holiday Party
- Wednesday, December 13, 8:00 pm**
Three Parks Board Meeting
- Wednesday, January 10, 8:00 pm**
Three Parks Board Meeting
- Wednesday, January 24, 8:00 pm**
Three Parks Membership Meeting

President's Report

By Merle McEldowney

What's Happening? The results of the mayoral and district attorney races are not really in doubt, but it is always important to vote.

There are three propositions on the ballot on Election Day. TPID voted unanimously to endorse a NO on the Constitutional Convention (ConCon), Proposition 1. It is important to get to the polls to defeat the ConCon, since it is possible the upstate vote could pass it. Proposition 2 involves the right to pensions of state employees who have been convicted of crimes. Proposition 3 involves land in the Adirondack and Catskill parks.

The Proposal 3 amendment will create a land account with up to 250 acres of forest preserve land eligible for use by towns, villages and counties that have no viable alternative to using forest preserves to address specific public health and safety concerns. As a substitute for the land removed from the forest preserve, another 250 acres of land will be added to the forest preserve, subject to legislative approval. The proposed amendment also will allow bicycle trails and certain public utility lines to be located within the width of specified highways that cross the forest preserve while minimizing the removal of trees and vegetation.

Following this report, Daniel Marks Cohen, New York State Committeeman, has written a more detailed explanation of the three propositions. I agree with all his recommendations.

The month of October was a busy one. At our club meeting, Dan Garodnick spoke on transportation problems in NYC and explained why the solutions are so costly and difficult. Club members have been on Broadway every weekend reminding New Yorkers to vote NO on the ConCon. And, following the disastrous hurricane in Puerto Rico, TPID has been encouraging club members to make contributions to either UNICEF or the Hispanic Federation. I want to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed or intend to do so.

At our club meeting on Wednesday night, November 8, Daniel O'Donnell will present his perceptions on what is happening in Albany and his expectations for the upcoming season. Robert Jackson will speak on the importance of saying NO to the IDC.

A final word: Make sure to VOTE on November 7.

State Committee Report

By Daniel Marks Cohen, State Committeeman

While most of our attention has been (rightfully) focused on the Constitutional Convention (ConCon) referendum on Election Day, November 7, there are two other initiatives on the ballot. I welcome this opportunity to provide a detailed summary of the three proposals and encourage you to vote NO on Proposal #1, and YES on Proposals #2 and #3.

Proposal #1—the ConCon—would call for a constitutional convention to explore proposals for changes to the state constitution. Every two decades, New York voters have a referendum on whether to revise the New York State Constitution. If a majority of voters approve the ConCon in 2017, then delegates are chosen by voters in November 2018. The delegates meet in Albany in April 2019 at a convention to debate modifying the Constitution. Changes approved by a majority of the delegates are submitted to the voters, and a majority in favor would ratify those changes. The problem is the process, with no restrictions on who runs to serve as a delegate, no limits on changes proposed, and no protections for prior legislative victories. A ConCon would send lobbyists surging into the state, eager to make changes for their patrons. Rather than creating new wars to wage, let us confront the challenges we face today. If we take back the State Senate, the changes nonprofit groups seek could be attained through the regular legislative process, rather than through a ConCon free-for-all, and without risking rights we have fought for decades to attain and preserve. With much in jeopardy, the temptation to vote for the ConCon must be tempered by the larger issues we are tackling now.

Vote NO on Proposal #1.

Proposal #2—Pension Forfeiture for Convicted Officials Amendment—would allow judges to reduce or revoke the state pension of a public officer convicted of a felony. The capital region newspaper, the Daily Gazette, reports that each legislative house in Albany overwhelmingly voted for the bill, the second time the full legislature has approved it, which is the final step before the proposed amendment goes before voters this fall. Notably, under the proposal, a convicted official would not automatically lose his/her pension, but could in an ensuing court review. Lawmakers took this extraordinary step after the convictions of more than two dozen of their colleagues over the last decade primarily on corruption charges — including the former leaders of the Assembly and Senate in 2015. Despite being convicted, ex-lawmakers still qualify for lucrative state pensions. Ex-NY State Senate

leader Dean Skelos, the Rockville Centre lawmaker convicted along with his son, is slated to receive \$95,000 annually, for example. The corruption conviction was recently overturned but is due to be retried by law enforcement officials next year.

Vote YES on Proposal #2.

Proposal #3—Forest Preserve Land Bank Amendment—would create a 250-acre land bank, which would allow local governments to request forest preserve land for projects in exchange for the state acquiring 250 acres for the forest preserves. Adirondack Wild reports that lawmakers authorized a public vote on a constitutional amendment to create a 250-acre land bank for the Adirondack and Catskill parks. By voting yes, voters will make it easier for communities to make infrastructure improvements in the most sensitive areas of the parks while ensuring the preservation of state land. Under the current law, each time a community wants to smooth out a dangerous curve on a road or a bridge, build a safe bike path near a highway, put up equipment to expand the coverage of broadband communication, drill a well on public land or install sewer lines in the environmentally protected Forest Preserve, someone has to propose an amendment to the state constitution in order for the action to move forward. In exchange for doing work on one piece of land in the Forest Preserve, the law requires the state to swap that piece of property with another piece of land, which is then set aside for preservation, thereby ensuring the perpetuation of forever-wild land.

Many of these projects are designed to improve public safety and quality of life. Bike paths shouldn't be on highways; they should be safely off to the side. Evening out curves on roads and on approaches to bridges will lessen the chance of accidents. Culverts help prevent flooding and damage to nearby property. Expanded broadband access helps in both emergency communication and economic development. But for each such project, the law requires that the state constitution be amended. The amendment process requires approval by two successive state Legislatures and a public vote, which can stretch the approval process out over a minimum of two or three years, often longer.

Under this legislation, that process would be streamlined with the creation of a land bank. Under strict guidelines to protect the environment — such as limiting the size of new projects and weighing their impact on surrounding wildlife — these small but necessary projects could go forward without a separate constitutional amendment for each. To fulfill the requirement that developed land

be swapped for some undeveloped land, the project developers will just tap into the 250 acres set aside in the land bank. As the 250 acres are used, the project sponsors will be required to pay into a Forest Preserve expansion account, with the money being used to purchase additional land in the Forest Preserve.

To ensure that the projects themselves meet environmental standards, the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) would have approval authority over each project. This whole new process will significantly reduce the time and expense needed for simple but necessary improvements. What's even more remarkable than the legislation itself is how various groups in the two parks, often which have competing agendas, came together to formulate the legislation over the last few months. Supporters include the Adirondack Council, the Adirondack Mountain Club, Protect the Adirondacks! Adirondack Wild, the Nature Conservancy, Adirondack Common Ground Alliance, the Citizens Campaign for the Environment, the Catskill Center for Conservation and Design, Environmental Advocates, Scenic Hudson, the Catskill Mountainkeeper and the New York League of Conservation Voters. This will make the park safer and more enjoyable, it will protect the Adirondack and Catskill experience, and it will save taxpayers time and money through greater efficiency of the approval process.

Vote YES on Proposal #3.

What's on Broadway These Days?

By Judy Wood

On a trip to Milan, Italy last spring, I found unexpected delight in simply walking along the streets heading to “tourist destinations” and looking in store windows. I found a wide variety of small shops and restaurants that looked very inviting.

In our Upper West Side Community, what do we have these days? In a modest attempt to get a handle on what there is, I've done a serious walk up one side and down the other of Broadway, from 96th St. to 108 Streets. What follows is a partial list of what we call “mom and pop” stores and individually owned businesses. I hope this list encourages folks to patronize our locals. If we don't, they too will probably disappear in due time.

Happily, there are many small businesses in our neighborhood, most owned by immigrants from many countries and employing immigrants.

The establishments are mostly restaurants — in many sizes and serving ethnically diverse foods. Most are on

Broadway; a few are on Amsterdam.

Here is my list in alpha order:

Aangan
Abbey Pub
Arco Cafe
Awadh
Awash
Broadway Bagels
Broadway Pizza
Broadway Restaurant & Coffee Shop
Cafe du Soleil
Cheesy Pizza
Earth Cafe
Flora de Mayo
Henry's
Jerusalem Restaurant
Lava Kitchen
Lenny's Bagels
Macchina
Malaysia Grill
Metro Diner
Mexican Festival
Naruto Ramen
Regional
Richie's Burger Joint
Sal & Carmine's Pizza
Szechuan Garden
Smokin' Jazz
Texas BBQ
West End Hall
Yakitori-Sun Chan

This is just a partial list. In addition, there are hardware stores, liquor stores, jewelry shops and beauty shops. Then there are a few to whom we owe some allegiance, even if the prices may be a bit higher than the chains. Suba Pharmacy, for instance, who offers TPID members a 10% discount, and Best Copy who does TPID's printing. It's easy to patronize the restaurants and businesses closest to us, as I do, and imagine many of us do. But it's also important to patronize those that are more than just a block or two away. It's up to us to "shop local" and keep our community alive and vital!

Undocumented Teen Finally Gets Abortion

By Wendy Dannett

For several weeks, a 17 year old undocumented teen, who calls herself Jane Doe, applied for an abortion. She was living in a detention center, and the Trump administration blocked her request, which prompted a lawsuit filed by the ACLU. Early on Wednesday, October 25, after an appeals court ruled in her favor, Jane Doe left the shelter and had the abortion.

This young woman had crossed illegally into the United States, after making a trek alone from Central America. When she was detained at the US-Mexico border, she was told she was pregnant. She had no guardian or parental consent, which is mandated for an abortion by Texas law. But she felt strongly she was not ready to be a parent. She had to withstand being taken to a religiously affiliated crisis pregnancy center where she was forced to view sonograms, and where they tried to convince her to keep the baby.

"I'm a 17 year old girl that came to this country to make a better life for myself. My journey wasn't easy, but I came with hope in my heart to build a life I can be proud of. I dream about studying, becoming a nurse....When I was detained, I was placed in a shelter for children. It was there that I was told I was pregnant. I knew immediately what was best for me then, as I do now—that I'm not ready to be a parent."

Though the abortion ended the girl's court challenge, the broader legal battle over the federal government's position on abortion is not over. A court case permitting undocumented teens in its custody to have abortions is pending in U.S. District Court in Washington. Hundreds of pregnant, undocumented immigrants have been in federal custody in recent years, according to court filings. Rape is often part of the trek to the U.S., so many young women are in Jane Doe's situation.

The issue of Jane Doe and her abortion is also part of a larger picture involving the detention of undocumented immigrants. Immigration detention began in the 1890s at Ellis Island. Mandatory detention became officially authorized by President Bill Clinton in 1996 with the enactment of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act. From 1996–2008, the number of immigrants in detention increased from 8,500 to over 30,000.

Immigrant detention has been growing over the past ten years. Immigrant women and their families are held in family detention centers, called "alternative to detention"

which University of Kansas researchers found to function like jails and prisons. ADT programs are expanded surveillance schemes. Women are often required to wear orange jump suits. Attorneys who frequent the centers in Pennsylvania and Texas said the centers were like regular criminal incarceration, despite immigration being a civil offense.

The language used to describe the centers is benign, belying the conditions of thick, concrete walls, heavy doors monitored by guards, small windows or none at all, and flood lights. The centers are often in remote locations, and often lack proper food, clean water, health facilities and cleanliness. Clearly, immigration detention is a travesty. And Jane Doe is back in her center, now that she has had her abortion.

Manhattan Civil Court Vacancies in 2018

Next year there are eight open New York County Civil Court seats, plus one incumbent, Frank Nervo (1st Civil Court District) running for re-election.

The open vacancies are: Two county-wide seats; one the 2nd Civil Court District, one in the 3rd, one the 5th, one in the 6th (Harold B. Adler reaches the constitutional age limit); one in the 9th; and one in the 10th (Geoffrey D. S. Wright reaches the constitutional age limit).

Alan Flacks

Join Our November 30 Phone Bank to Take Back Congress!

By Chuck Wall

Three Parks' team of Take Back Congress volunteers will be holding our next phone bank on Thursday, November 30. We invite all interested Club members to join us!

The latest news, especially the heightened threats to Medicare and Social Security in the GOP budget blueprints recently passed by both the House and the Senate, gives our campaign fresh momentum. Taking our cue from recent headlines, we have updated our talking points to focus on the imminent danger of devastating funding cuts to many programs vital to the health and welfare of vulnerable senior citizens.

As before, we will be reaching out to voters in the 19th Congressional District in upstate New York, a district currently represented by Republican John Faso but considered a genuine opportunity for a Democratic pick-up in the 2018 Midterm elections. Congressman Faso's votes in favor of those headline-making budget cuts—and

his even more egregious proposal to cut Medicaid funding that supports elderly patients in New York State nursing homes—give us a real opportunity to erode his support among Republican voters. Faso's electoral margin in the district was already slim, so our campaign can definitely help achieve a Democratic victory in 2018.

In the 19th District, there is not yet a Democratic nominee for the 2018 election, but since Faso is clearly vulnerable, Democrats are lining up to challenge him. Once a Democratic candidate is selected next spring, we expect to shift our focus to support for that candidate, and we plan to coordinate our activities with those of progressive groups in the district.

So join your fellow TPID club members for the November 30 phone bank, and help take back Congress! Watch for details in future email blasts, or check the TPID website www.threeparksdems.org. We invite all interested club members to join us, but once you get the email invitation, remember to respond promptly as space may be limited. No computers are needed, but please bring a cellphone. Scripts and training are provided.



*Three Parks wishes
Milivoy & Christine Samurovich
speedy recoveries.*



Vote NO
On the
Constitutional Convention
Proposal no. 1
Tuesday, November 7

Turn your ballot over & Vote NO!



The Three Parks Independent Democrats Annual Holiday Party

Sunday, December 3, 2017

5:00-8:00 p.m.

The Youth Hostel

891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103 Street

Ballroom

Admission is FREE so plan to come and enjoy the fun, festivities and food with other club members and their families.

Please bring a main dish (for 6 to 8)—meat, fish, vegetable, potato/pasta/rice, or dessert—for the buffet. Three Parks also will collect cash or checks made out to West Side Campaign Against Hunger.

Please let Lorraine Zamora know what you will bring. She can be reached at 917-348-5136 or lzamora245@gmail.com.

2018 MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member _____ Renewal _____

Membership Category—Check One

Individual (\$25) _____

Family—two adults in the same household (\$40) _____

Low Income (\$15) _____ Low Income Family (\$20) _____

Sponsor (\$50) _____ Patron (\$100) _____

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (H) _____ (Cell) _____

Email _____

Check here _____ if you prefer to receive the newsletter **solely** by email.

Please pay your dues with a check, money order or via PayPal.

Please address all checks to **TPID 2018 Dues.**

Mail to: Three Parks Independent Democrats

Cathedral Station, P.O. Box 1316, New York, NY 10025 Attn: Treasurer

Dear Suba Customers,

Faced with rising drug costs and now prescription drug reimbursements from health insurance plans, pharmacy profits are at an all-time low. As a result, we would like you to consider expanding your shopping experience here at SUBA, as we now have a broader selection of **health, beauty, household, natural and organic products**. Our prices are competitive with, and often significantly lower, than the major drug store chains in the neighborhood.

Once again, we thank you and, remember, we are just a phone call away!



Suba Pharmacy 2721 Broadway at 104 Street | 212-866-6700

Editor's Note:

Suba Pharmacy is one of the few independent family-owned pharmacies on the Upper West Side. Equally important, Mr. Suba cares about his customers and goes out of his way to accommodate them. In 2004, when Suba's lease was about to expire, Three Parks petitioned to reinstate the store's lease. We were successful. It's time to help the pharmacy again. On behalf of Suba, thanks for your patronage.

Three Parks Independent Democrats
Cathedral Station P. O. Box 1316
New York, NY 10025

Next Meeting, Wednesday, November 8, 2017
Daniel J. O'Donnell, "What's Happening in Albany?"
Robert Jackson, "No IDC"